

Appl. No. 09/837,020
Amndt. Dated September 23, 2003
Reply to Office Action of August 15, 2003

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method of preventing defective germination or growth of a plant comprising the steps of:

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encapsulating at least one plant seed ~~or a plurality of plant seeds~~ in an aqueous gel capsule;
refrigerating the at least one plant seeds seed under the condition that the at least one plant
~~seeds do~~ seed does not germinate; and
sowing the at least one plant seeds. seed.

Claim 2 (currently amended): The method of preventing defective germination or growth of a plant according to claim 1, wherein the size of the at least one plant seed is equal to or less than 1 mm.

Claim 3 (original): The method of preventing defective germination or growth of a plant according to claim 1, wherein the refrigeration is carried out in a dark place.

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Claim 4 (original): The method of preventing defective germination or growth of a plant according to claim 2, wherein the refrigeration is carried out in a dark place.

Claim 5 (currently amended): The method of preventing defective germination or growth of a plant according to claim 3, wherein the at least one plant seed is a seed of a light germinator.

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Cont.
Claim 6 (currently amended): The method of preventing defective germination or growth of a plant according to claim 4, wherein the at least one plant seed is a seed of a light germinator.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The method of preventing defective germination or growth of a plant as claimed in claim 1, wherein the at least one plant seed encapsulated in an aqueous gel capsule is a pelletized seed.

Claim 8 (currently amended): The method of preventing defective germination or growth of a plant as claimed in claim 2, wherein the at least one plant seed encapsulated in an aqueous gel capsule is a pelletized seed.

Claim 9 (currently amended): The method of preventing defective germination or growth of a plant as claimed in claim 3, wherein the at least one plant seed encapsulated in an aqueous gel capsule is a pelletized seed.

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Claim 10 (currently amended): The method of preventing defective germination or growth of a plant as claimed in claim 4, wherein the at least one plant seed encapsulated in an aqueous gel capsule is a pelletized seed.

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Corrected.
Claim 11 (currently amended): The method of preventing defective germination or growth of a plant as claimed in claim 5, wherein the at least one plant seed encapsulated in an aqueous gel capsule is a pelletized seed.

Claim 12 (currently amended): The method of preventing defective germination or growth of a plant as claimed in claim 6, wherein the at least one plant seed encapsulated in an aqueous gel capsule is a pelletized seed.

Claim 13 (currently amended): The method of preventing defective germination or growth of a plant according to claim 1, wherein the step of refrigerating the at least one encapsulated plant seeds seed is conducted at a temperature of about 15°C or lower and for a sufficient period of time to improve the germination of the at least one encapsulated plant seeds seed as compared to non-refrigerated encapsulated plant seeds.